



Gender norms in the family: The unintended consequences of women's political inclusion in India

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Background

- ❖ **Policy Background:** In 1993, India passed its 73rd Amendment ACT, which imposed compulsory political inclusion of women (1/3 seats) in rural India (for more information see Iyer et al, 2012, Khalsi, 2017, O'Connell, 2018).
- **Staggering Policy:** different states adopted the policy at different times (See Table 1).
- ❖ **Types of Marriage in Modern India:**
 - Semi-arranged marriages: In modern India, parents/elders select partners for their child (first screening) and then is passed on to the prospective bride/groom for their say (second/final screening)
 - Love marriages
- ❖ **Hypothesis:** To test the role model effect on Gender Norms in the Family.
- ❖ **Contribution:** It studies the effect of woman inclusion on gender norms such as autonomy and Intimate partner violence (IPV).
- ❖ **Potential Mechanism:** Choice of husband
- ❖ **Data:** National Family Health Survey (NFHS), India
 - Two cross sectional dataset, 2005-2006 and 2015-2016 (includes only married woman)
 - More than 50,000 observations
 - 23 years of marriage data across 16 states (1985-2007).

Identification Strategy

The study tries to estimate the “role model effect” on gender norms in the family via the choice of husband, using the Difference-in-Differences Strategy:

$$Y_{isc} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Married Post Reform}_{sc} + \delta'X_i + \gamma'X_{sc} + \lambda_t + \theta_s + \tau_c + \theta_s \times c + \varepsilon_{isc}$$

Where Y_{isc} indicates woman i in state s belonging to marriage cohort c .

Married Post Reform = 1 if the woman got married one year or more after the reform and 0 otherwise.

β_1 = is the parameter of interest

X_i = includes individual-level covariates

X_{sc} = includes time-varying state covariates

λ_t = interview year fixed effect

θ_s = state fixed effects

τ_c = year of marriage fixed effect

$\theta_s \times c$ = state-specific linear year of marriage trends,

Wild cluster bootstrap-t is used for inference to deal with the issue of small number of clusters (Cameron *et al*, 2008).

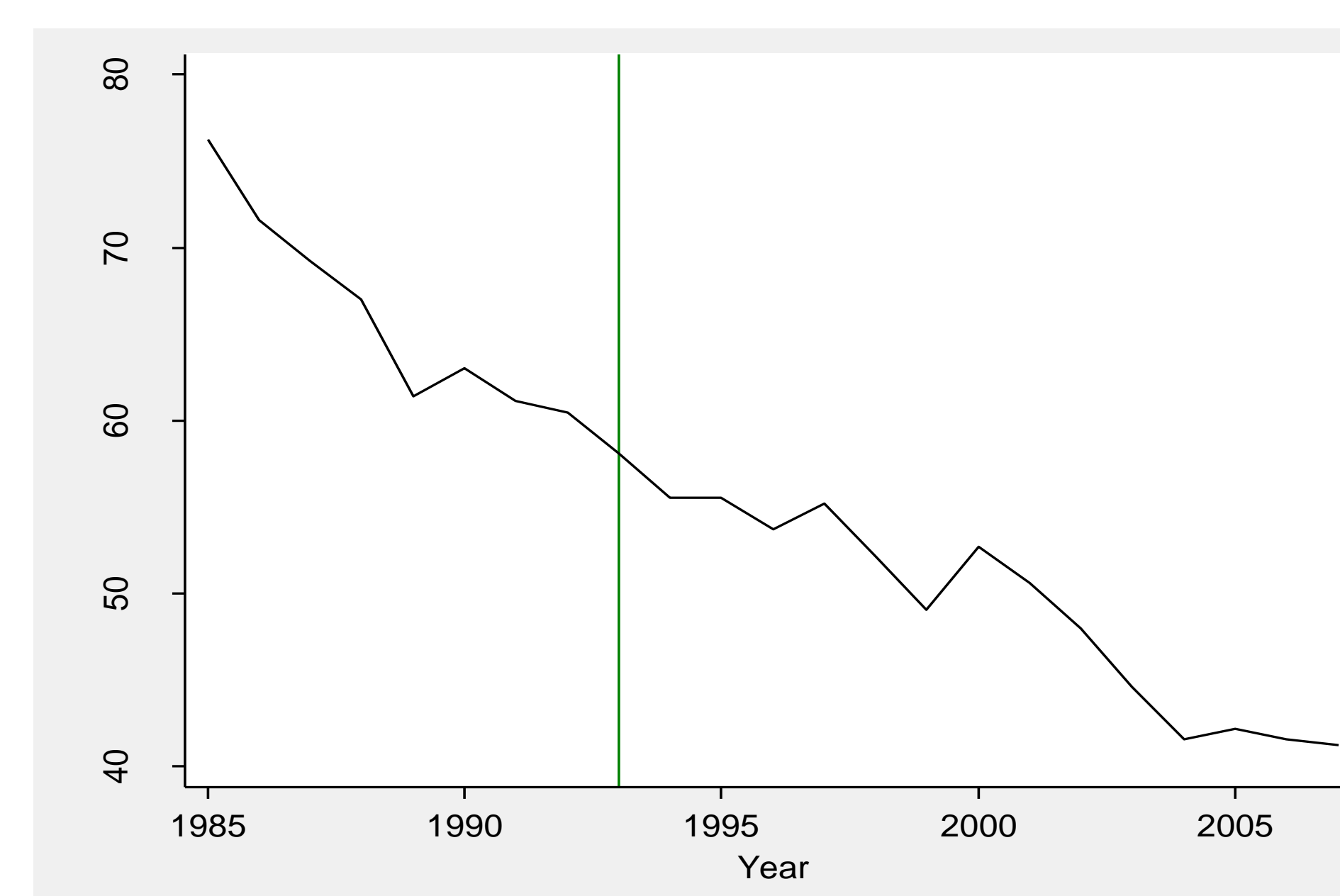


Table 1: Policy implementation year by states

States	Year	States	Year
Andhra Pradesh	1995	Madhya Pradesh	1994
Assam	2000	Maharashtra	1992
Bihar	2001	Orissa	1992
Gujrat	1995	Punjab	1998
Himachal Pradesh	1995	Rajasthan	1995
Jammu and Kashmir	2001	Tamil Nadu	1996
Karnataka	1987	Uttar Pradesh	1995
Kerala	1991	West Bengal	1993

Source: Iyer et al(2012), Khalsi (2017)

Figure 1: Proportion of child marriage over the years



Source: Author's presentation from the NFHS India data

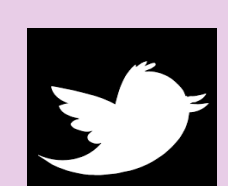
Findings/Discussion

- ❖ No effect on *unrestricted sample*: The sample consists of both legal age marriage and child marriage (i.e., when a girl gets married before the age of 18 and a boy gets married before the age of 21)
 - Although child marriages have been reduced but it is still high (See Fig 1).
- ❖ Effects on legal age marriage (restricted) sample:
 - Women are now choosing better quality husband with higher education and less age difference between the couple by 0.2 years
 - Significant increase on women's autonomy, but
 - Null effect on intimate partner violence (IPV).
 - Further, by examining the views of husband and wife on IPV under various circumstances, also shows a null effect.
 - The reason for no effect on IPV might be due to the slow moving cultural norms
- ❖ This policy has been studied extensively. However, the unintended consequences of this policy is limited while the literature claims it has major effects.

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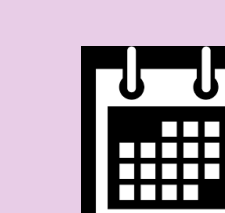
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Key References

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2. Iyer, L., Mani, A., Mishra, P., Topalova, P., 2012. The power of political voice women's political representation and crime in India. *Am. Econ. J.: Appl. Econ.* 4 (4), 93 - 165.
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